SECT. III.—ON A GENERAL AND PARTICULAR PROVIDENCE.

There have been disputes among thinking minds in all ages as to whether the providence of God is general or particular. Philosophers, so called, have generally taken the former view, and divines the latter. There has been a wide difference between the views of these two parties, but there is no necessary antagonism between the doctrines themselves. The general providence of God, properly understood, reaches to the most particular and minute objects and events; and the particular providence of God becomes general by its embracing every particular. *

Those who suppose that there is a general., but that there cannot be a particular providence, are limiting God by ideas derived from human weakness. The greatest of human minds., in contemplating important ends, are obliged to overlook many minor events falling out incidentally as they execute their plans. The legislator, for example, is sometimes under the necessity of disregarding the temporary misery which the changes introduced by him, and which are advantageous as a whole, may bring along with them. In short, in attending to the general, man must often overlook the particular. But we are not to suppose that an infinite God, infinite in his power, his wisdom, his resources, and present through all his works, is laid under any such inability to attend to particular events, because he is also superintending empires and worlds. The pains, if we may so speak, which God has taken to beautify every loaf and flower-*-nay, every weed that we trample under foot—the new beauties, unseen by the naked eye, which the microscope discloses in the vegetable kingdoms, and the beautiful organization of the insect world—all show that the greatness of God is peculiarly seen in the care which*he takes of objects the most

minute.

On the other hand, they take a mo.4 unworthy view of the Divine character who conclude that lu's attention is directed exclusively to a few favourite objects, iu which they themselves possibly feel, a special interest. Here, ngnin, we discover the tendency of mankind to measure Deity by standards derived from human infirmity. It not infrequently happens that the minute man, who manages with care and kindness his own affairs and those of his family, has no very enlarged views or